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## **MCLE Requirements – A Primer for Law Librarians**

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Have you suddenly found yourself in charge of Minimum Continuing Legal Education ("MCLE") record keeping for your law firm? If so, here is a primer to help get you up to speed in a hurry.

How many hours are required?

25 total hours are required. 12.5 of these hours must be participatory, the other 12.5 can be either additional participatory hours or self-study.

The hours are broken down into two categories, special and general requirements.

The special requirements are Legal Ethics (4 hours), Detection/Prevention of Substance Abuse (1 hour) and Elimination of Bias (1 hour). The other 19 hours are general education requirements. The general education seminars are aimed at keeping attorneys abreast of important developments within their field of practice.

What is the difference between participatory and self-study hours?

These activities are valid for participatory credit: 1) attending a live education seminar; 2) teaching or attending law school classes; 3) verified electronic education such as certain live webcasts and replays of live webcasts. The Bar website has an archive of such webcasts that count for participatory credit at <http://www.legalspan.com/calbar/>. The webcast issue is complicated, so do not assume that a webcast or archived webcast is suitable for participatory credit without verification of that fact from the provider.

These activities are considered self-study: 1) taking a self-assessment test; 2) writing a legal article accepted for publication; or 3) listening to a self-study program (tape, CD, video or other media format).

What are compliance groups and what are their respective deadlines?

The bar has divided attorneys into three compliance groups with different deadlines, based on the first letter of the attorney's last name. Group 1 (A-G), Period: 2/1/01 - 1/31/04, Deadline: 02/01/2004; Group 2 (H-M), Period: 2/1/00 -1/31/03, Deadline: 02/01/2003; Group 3 (N-Z), Period: 2/1/02-1/31/05, Deadline:02/01/2005

What records are kept regarding MCLE credits and attendance?

MCLE approved providers will make certificates of attendance available to participants. The certificates will list the name of the provider, title of program and credits fulfilled.

A self-assessment exam is an article followed by a series of exam questions. The attorney completes the exam and sends it to the provider along with a small fee. The provider will return a verification certificate.

Attorneys must also record the time that they spend listening or watching self-study materials. Your law firm administrator will most likely have a form that the firm uses for this purpose. I keep a supply of them on the shelf in the library next to the MCLE self-study resources so that the attorneys can take one when they sign out self-study materials.

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